VISIT…

The Tower of Deception

A short adventure for four 9th-level player characters

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Based on the original Dungeons & Dragons® game by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and on the new edition of the Dungeons & Dragons game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Rich Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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Introduction

When Ustran Yg'niv, an evil githyanki wizard, built his tower on a rocky island amid the misty moors of Halron Bay, he had no idea that sailors would mistake the light of his magical *Astral Shard* at the top of his tower for the beacon of a lighthouse. The light brought many sailors to an untimely doom. But Ustran did not care. He laughed at their plight and continued his nefarious work: using the power of the *Astral Shard* to kidnap creatures in the midst of teleporting and divert them to his lair. One day, however, his own people appeared to drag the githyanki wizard back to his native Astral Plane. He's not been seen since.

But his tower remains. Not only does it continue to trick sailors on foggy nights (though most now have been warned by the legends of the "haunted lighthouse"), but the magic of the *Astral Shard* continues Ustran's evil abduction scheme. Originally, Ustran enslaved or robbed the victims the *Shard* delivered to him. With the githyanki gone, now they remain trapped within the evil tower until they devise an escape or die.

Preparation

You, the Dungeon Master (DM), need a copy of the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual* to use this adventure.

Text that appears in shaded boxes is player information, which you may read aloud or paraphrase when appropriate. Unshaded boxes contain important information for you, including special instructions. Monster and NPC statistics are provided with each encounter in abbreviated form or, where appropriate, the proper page in the *Monster Manual* is referenced.

This adventure was designed around the Tower of Deception map by Todd Gamble from the Official D&D Website's Map-a-Week feature. It's reprinted on page 4; download a full-sized version from the site at `www.wizards.com/dnd/article.asp?x=dnd/mw/archive`.

Character Hooks

There are two ways to lead the characters into this adventure. First, they may have heard complaints from sailing and merchant guilds offering a 5,000 gp reward for the elimination of a tower that has created havoc in the bay for decades. Or, the PCs may have been caught by the *Astral Shard*'s *teleport* web to become prisoners of the tower. The first is a more standard adventure setup; the second can apply any time the PCs teleport somewhere (on their own or by someone/something else).

Helping Merchants and Sailors

If you are using the first means, the PCs are contacted by Thyris Nostalin, a wealthy merchant who traffics in seaborne trade. He, sponsored by the local sailor's guild and as a representative of a powerful merchant guild, offers them 5,000 gp to eliminate the tower once and for all. The payment is a bounty, so it comes at the end of the job, and only if the PCs succeed. Other than the general location and the use of a 50-foot keelboat (with a crew of eight 1st-level commoner sailors), Thyris can offer them little help.

If the PCs use the keelboat and her crew, the sailors make it clear to the PCs that they've been hired to take them to the "haunted lighthouse" but nothing more. In fact, they drop the characters off on the island and then pull off at least a half-mile to wait for a signal. If the characters offer to fly or somehow transport themselves to the island from the boat, all the better.

The *Astral Shard*

The stone at the top of the tower is an otherplanar power source described further in Level Nine. It exudes this effect on the entire island and tower: Any spell with the teleportation subtype, including *teleport without error, teleport circle, dimension door,* and *word of recall,* (but not *plane shift, etherealness,* or *astral projection*) takes the teleporting character(s) to Level Eight rather than the intended destination.

The magical *Shard* powers the *teleport* web on Level Eight. Ustran intended arriving victims to fall under his standing *suggestion* effect, which compels them to visit Level Six. There, a magical trap would freeze them solid to await his pleasure.

Gather Information or Bardic Knowledge Check

If the PCs take the time to ask around, or if a bard is present, they can attempt to discern more information about the tower. The PCs learn all the items up to and including the one for the highest DC they achieve.

- **DC 10:** The tower showed up about 40 years ago. No one knows who built it, or why.
- **DC 20:** A nonhuman wizard lives in the tower, preying upon the ships he traps.
- **DC 25:** The wizard in the tower is concerned with loftier things than raiding the occasional off-course ship.
- **DC 30:** The wizard in the tower is either gone, dead, or preparing something important, for it has been even quieter than normal around there of late.

Trapped!

If you are using the second character hook, utilize this adventure whenever the PCs all teleport somewhere. Do not use it the first time the characters teleport. Allow them to be free of worry when they are caught. Do not give anything away until you begin describing their current location (see Level Eight) rather than the one they expected. The *Astral Shard* grabs teleporting creatures randomly, from anywhere in the world, so don't be afraid to set the tower in a locale very distant from the characters' point of origin—perhaps even in an area of the world of which they have never heard. The sidebar at left offers a brief overview of the *Shard*'s workings.

TOWER FEATURES

There are only two doors in the whole tower, and both of them are the doors to the outside on Level One. Each of these is a sturdy wooden door (**Wooden Doors:** 2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 20; AC 5; Break DC 23). See the tower map on page 4 for more details.

The ceilings are all 20 feet high. The floors of Levels One through Five are stone, while the floors of Levels Six through Nine are wooden.

OUTSIDE THE TOWER

As the characters spy the tower, read the following:

> Splintered and smashed, at least a dozen ships lay slain at the feet of the grand tower built upon the tiny rocky islet. Some have rotted there so long, they are almost unrecognizable as seafaring craft, while others still sport the remains of tattered sails and rigging that blow in the salty breeze.
>
> The tower itself is actually five towers joined together. The central tower is the tallest and quite massive, with a pulsating yellow light at its very top. The discolored, aged, brownish stones are covered with a dark, wet slime from years of seaspray. There are no signs of life.

The tower is about 180 feet tall. Exploring the wrecked ships is a time-consuming and dangerous enterprise. Every half hour, roll on this chart. Do not repeat encounters. Instead, treat results that you've already rolled as "no encounter."

d%	Result
01-60	No encounter
61-70	The weight on the ship being explored causes it to shift, splinter, and collapse. All involved in the search must make Reflex saving throws (DC 20). Failure means that the character suffers 2d6 points of damage from the fall and the cuts from the splintered wood. (Flying characters take no damage.)
71-80	3d6 Medium zombies, dressed like sailors, rise up from the water and attack.

Zombies (3d6): 16 hp each; *Monster Manual* p. 191

81-87 1d6 wraiths attack from one of the wrecked ships. They moan, "Deceivers! Murderers!"

Wraiths (1d6): 32 hp each; *Monster Manual* p. 185

88-94 A pair of chuul rise up out of the water and attack. If one is slain, the other retreats back underwater.

Chuul (2): hp 90, 103; *Monster Manual* p. 36

95-00 1d3 spectres attack seemingly from nowhere (with an automatic surprise round).

Spectres (1d3): 45 hp each; *Monster Manual* p. 169

Every half hour, the characters exploring should make Search checks (DC 20). If anyone succeeds, roll on the following chart to determine what they found. Do not repeat results—if you get the same result twice, reroll. Once all results are found, none others are possible.

d%	Item
01-30	100 feet of usable rope
31-50	Planks salvageable to make a raft (Craft [carpenter] check at DC 15 , takes about two hours)
51-60	A barrel with enough fresh water for four people for four days
61-70	A bolt of fine silk, well preserved, worth 100 gp
71-80	A pair of masterwork scimitars
81-85	A small coffer with 248 gp and 312 sp
86-90	A rotted logbook from the *Bonny Trader*. It indicates that after the ship ran aground here, the remaining crew was attacked by "strange beasts that were all mouth, disappeared after biting your leg off." The writer believed a powerful wizard lived in the tower.
91-00	A keelboat that—with a full day's work and a Profession (shipwright) or Craft (carpenter) check (DC 18)—could be fully repaired

LEVEL ONE: THE MAZE (EL 9)

Read the following to introduce Level One.

> Inside, the tower is damp and musty. The ceiling is at least 20 feet high. Beyond the door lies a narrow passage: only 2 or 3 feet wide. This will be a tight squeeze.

The first level of the tower is a maze with very narrow passages. While in the narrow passages, Medium and Large size creatures are denied their Dexterity bonuses. Large creatures also operate at a –2 circumstance penalty to any physical action. Larger creatures than that simply cannot traverse the maze.

Creatures. The maze is haunted by four wraiths that can move freely through the narrow passages due to their incorporeal nature. They hate all living things; thus anyone passing through the maze is likely to be attacked by a chilling claw through a wall. The wraiths attempt to use the narrow passages to their advantage, making attacks through the walls when possible (suffering a 50% miss chance because they cannot see their target).

Wraiths: hp 27, 29, 35, 40; *Monster Manual* p. 185

Trap: At the center of the maze is an open area. This entire space is a magical trap that the PCs must bypass to get to the stairs and the second level. The trap has two settings. The first is a blast of magical fire that fills the central, octagonal area whenever a creature enters. Remaining in the area or leaving does not set it off, but each time a creature enters, the trap fires (although never more than once per round in the case of multiple creatures entering at once).

Flame Blast: CR 5; 10-ft. fire burst (10d6); Reflex save halves damage (DC 15); Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

Even after the characters survive or disable that trap, a second magical trap is activated. This trap teleports all creatures in the area to Level Eight (see page 8).

Teleporter: CR 1; Teleports victims; Will saving throw resists (DC 18); Search (DC 31); Disable Device (DC 31).

Tower Windows

All the windows in the tower are shuttered and trapped. Each window is trapped with a lightning blast trap that goes off when the shutters are opened, affecting anyone within 10 feet of the window. Further, anyone attempting to exit through one must make a Will saving throw (DC 25) or simply refuse to exit the tower at all, as if a under a *suggestion* spell lasting 24 hours. After this period, the subject can try to leave again with a new save.

Lightning Blast: CR 5; 10-ft. electricity blast (10d6); Reflex save halves damage (DC 15); Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

LEVEL TWO: THE GUARDIAN (EL 13)

Read the following as the characters enter Level Two.

> A horrific beast with a reptilian body and numerous heads lumbers toward you. Its scales have a bluish-white sheen, and its cold eyes leer at you hungrily. The room itself is empty, save for a bloodstain here or a bit of shattered bone there.

Download this map from the D&D website's Map-A-Week archive (February 8, 2001) at
`http://www.wizards.com/dnd/article.asp?x=dnd/mw/archive`

This room is empty except for its single occupant.

Creature: A 10-headed cryohydra dwells in this chamber. Once each day, a spell (set up by Ustran) magically creates just enough food for the creature to live, but it is always hungry and eager for more food, perhaps in the form of intruders attempting to get in or prisoners attempting to get out. It attacks immediately, using its breath weapon to get at hard to reach foes (like someone looking in through a window or characters remaining on the stairs).

Cryohydra: 112 hp; *Monster Manual* p. 122

LEVEL THREE: WORKSHOP

As the PCs enter Level Three, read the text below:

> This large room is filled with long, curved marble-top tables, various wooden stands, metal shelves, and a few chairs. These crowded furnishings hold cauldrons, beakers, flasks, pots, tools, lumber, strange stones, a kiln, a forge, articles of clothing, simple jewelry, barrels, crates, and things that defy simple description. The desiccated carcass of a griffon suspended by hooks and chains from the ceiling. The walls appear to be covered with arcane diagrams and construction plans.
>
> Some of the crates have been opened, their straw-lined contents spilled out around them. Broken glass lies scattered across the floor, and one of the tables is tipped over with a mess of small objects strewn about it.

This is Ustran's old workshop, where he crafted alchemical and magic items. It has been fairly well looted by Wistamoch and Pandira (currently found on Level Seven). However, a character who makes a Search check (DC 25) finds on one table a *potion of invisibility* and two sunrods that have somehow escaped previous notice. Of course, the intact equipment, diagrams, items ready for enchantment, and other odds and ends in the room are worth approximately 5,000 gp if they could be transported out of here (approximate weight: 2 tons).

LEVEL FOUR: „GUARD DOGS" (EL 9)

Read the text below when the PCs reach Level Four.

> A bronze sculpture stands enigmatically in the center of this chamber. It's quite abstract, with little apparent rhyme or reason to its shape, although a number of jagged edges and sharp points give the whole thing a disturbing feel. The sculpture is 10 feet in diameter, 15 feet high, and has five or more deep, dark crevices and recesses.

The sculpture is magical. It exists on the Ethereal Plane as well as in the normal world. In the Ethereal, it is the strange home of eight ethereal marauders. The creatures live in the recesses of the sculpture, which Ustran created. Thanks to his wizardry, creatures native to the Ethereal Plane can touch the sculpture to be automatically and fully healed (they can call upon this power once each day). Further, when the marauders—whether in their ethereal state or not—come within 30 feet of the sculpture, it grants an enhancement bonus of +4 to their attack and damage rolls. Even if the characters found a way to move it, the sculpture has no real value (except for perhaps attracting the unwanted attention of ethereal marauders).

Creatures. Eight ethereal marauders attack anything that comes into this room. They all appear at once (free action) and attack a foe in a surprise round; if the characters can perceive ethereal creatures, roll initiative normally. On the next round, they attack then disappear. They repeat this tactic in the next round, switching foes. Any hurt marauder spends a round healing itself by touching the sculpture, then attacks in the next round. (The statue's healing aspect may make characters think there are more marauders in the room than there really are.)

Ethereal marauders (8): 11 hp each; *Monster Manual* p. 88

Treasure. Within each of the eight nichelike lairs of the sculpture lies a 250 gp golden pearl. If these are removed, the sculpture loses its magical powers.

Ad Hoc XP Adjustment: Award an additional +50% experience points for this encounter due to the influence of the sculpture.

LEVEL FIVE: LIVING QUARTERS (EL 9)

Upon reaching Level Five, the PCs see the following:

> This level is separated into a number of smaller rooms. Tapestries hang on the walls and rugs cover the floors, all woven with strange, abstract patterns that seem extremely alien in their concept. Furnishings are wooden and ornate in their carving and construction.

The central, main chamber is a large sitting room holding a long table covered with dishes. Six chairs surround the table. Other furnishings include a pair of stuffed chairs, a divan, and some smaller (worthless) bronze sculptures like the one found on Level Four.

The three round tower rooms are bedchambers, each with a heavy gray curtain to serve as a door. The bedchambers each have a large poster bed covered in fine linen, a nightstand, a chair, and a wardrobe. The wardrobes in two of the rooms are empty. The other is detailed under "Treasure," below.

The other rooms are a kitchen, a pair of storerooms, and a water closet. One of the storerooms is filled with particularly old and rotten food; the other, dry goods.

Creatures. Gulin Murth is a neutral human cleric of Fharlanghn who was trapped here when he attempted to use *word of recall*. He has used spells like *create food and water* to survive for the last month. Having already come into conflict with the nymph and the succubus on Level Seven, this powerful cleric assumes that anyone he encounters here is hostile. He has been unable to escape from the windows (he failed his save twice and now believes it is impossible) and thinks he cannot get past Level Two's cryohydra on his own to get out. He has sent lesser planar allies with messages to his church, but no help came. He is contemplating trying *plane shift*, but considers it risky.

If somehow convinced not to be hostile, Gulin asks where exactly they all are, and where the PCs came from. He'll explain his predicament, in a cagey sort of way. He will not go up to any level higher than this one (warning of "evil women" up there—he believes that Level Seven's occupants are demons), but he is willing to help defeat the cryohydra. If he hears that the creature is already neutralized, he tries to leave the tower on his own right then and there.

Gulin Murth: Male human Clr9; CR 9; Medium-size humanoid; HD 9d8+9; hp 60; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (touch 10, flat-footed 20) [[+2 plate armor]]; Atk +11/+6 melee (1d6+4, +1 quarterstaff) or +6/+1 ranged (1d6/¥3, shortbow); SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +9; AL N; Str 14, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 17, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +13, Healing +15, Knowledge (Religion) +13; Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Enchantment), Toughness, Weapon focus (quarterstaff).

Possessions: *+2 full plate armor, +1 quarterstaff, periapt of wisdom +2, potion of cure moderate wounds*, shortbow, 10 arrows, pouch containing 85 gp and 40 sp.

Spells Prepared (6/6/6/5/3/2; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*create water, light* (2), *read magic, resistance*†, *virtue;* 1st—*bless, command , endure elements, obscuring mist, sanctuary*, shield of faith;* 2nd—*aid*, bull's strength, endurance, hold person , sound burst* (2); 3rd—*dispel magic, invisibility purge, protection from elements*, searing light, summon monster II*; 4th—*freedom of movement*, greater magic weapon, spell immunity*; 5th—*slay living, spell resistance.*

*Domain spell. Domains: Protection (protective ward, +9 to a save), Luck (reroll any roll 1/day).

†Because of Spell Focus (Enchantment), the base DC for saves against these spells is 15 + spell level.

Tactics: If Gulin hears the PCs coming (a battle with the ethereal marauders or one on the level above is sure to clue him in), he will cast as many spells in preparation as he can, in this order: *spell resistance, greater magic weapon, spell immunity* (he chooses *lightning bolt* and *hold person*), *shield of faith, bull's strength, protection from elements (fire)*, and *aid*. In battle, he leads with either *searing light* or *dispel magic*, then enters melee.

Treasure. In a wardrobe in one of the bedchambers (the one that was used by Ustran, the first clockwise from the stairs down) there is a miscellaneous selection of clothing and a small iron box. The box is well locked (DC 30 to open) and contains some of the wizard's more valuable possessions: a *necklace of fireballs* (type V), a *wand of polymorph other* (23 charges), and a pair of spectacles. These spectacles are special, in that they are keyed to Ustran's *Boccob's blessed book* hidden under the bed (Search DC 15, but only possible to find if wearing the spectacles). The book can be seen only through the spectacles—even *true seeing* won't work.

The book contains these spells (10 pages are blank): 0—*dancing lights, detect magic, disrupt undead, ghost sound, light, mage hand, prestidigitation;* 1st—*comprehend languages, grease, magic missile, shield, silent image, summon monster I;* 2nd—*blindness/deafness, blink, invisibility, obscure object, see invisible, summon monster II, web;* 3rd—*displacement, fireball, Leomund's tiny hut, lightning bolt, major image, stinking cloud;* 4th—*dimension door, Otiluke's resilient sphere, polymorph other, polymorph self, stoneskin;* 5th—*false vision, teleport, wall of force;* 6th—*antimagic field*

LEVEL SIX: THE PRISONERS (EL 9)

The text below sets the scene for Level Six.

> Within this round tower chamber you see a rearing white stallion with a single golden horn and a gaunt humanoid covered in barbs and spines. Both appear to be literally frozen solid in ice. A light blue sphere 2 feet in diameter hovers in the room.

The two hapless creatures were once caught by the *teleport* web and brought here, only to be frozen by Ustran's magical orb. Once per round, this sphere attacks one creature in this chamber—anyone other than Ustran himself. It swoops at a random creature, attempting a touch attack (+5 bonus). If it hits, the target suffers 3d6 points of cold damage and must make a Fort save (DC 16) or freeze solid. While frozen, the creature remains alive but can take no actions.

A total of 20 points of fire damage to a frozen character frees him or her from the ice (but the character sustains the fire damage). The sphere can be destroyed if it suffers 10 points of fire damage (AC 12, touch AC 12, always fails saving throws).

Creatures. These are the unluckiest prisoners of the tower. The unicorn has been here for 16 years and will help those who free it, until they are all well away from the tower. The hamatula has been here for only seven years. It attacks as soon as it is freed.

Unicorn: 42 hp; *Monster Manual* p. 181

Hamatula: 49 hp; *Monster Manual* p. 49

Ad Hoc XP Adjustment: Treat the sphere as a CR6 challenge for the purpose of awarding experience points.

LEVEL SEVEN: BEAUTY AND THE BEAST (EL 10)

When the PCs reach Level Seven, read the following:

> Two long tables occupy this room, each covered with various items: weapons, armor, vials, scroll tubes, clothing, and other miscellaneous objects. Two lithe female humans occupy this chamber. One is a dark-haired woman with a sword. The other hides her head within a grotesque, tentacled helmet and wields a wand.

On this level, Ustran stored the non-monetary loot he got from the victims he kidnapped in the *teleport* web with the *Astral Shard.* (He spent all their money making magic items.)

Creatures. The two women here are a nymph named Wistamoch and a succubus named Pandira, both trapped when they were using *dimension door* and *teleport without error*. Wistamoch has been here almost a year, but Pandira showed up only six weeks ago.

Pandira tricked Wistamoch into donning the *dendritan,* a helmet made from the head of a mind flayer that was stored on one of the tables here. This gives Wistamoch some mental powers, but it has also taken control of her mind, effectively turning her lawful evil. Pandira is in human form and has armed herself with a *+1 greatsword* and wears a pair of *boots of speed* that were on the table. Wistamoch has a *wand of poison* (eight charges) and a *+2 ring of protection* found in the workshop (Level Three), as well as the helmet. They may attempt to speak with the PCs, but Pandira wants to take control of the tower for herself eventually (she's convinced Wistamoch to help her). To that end, she may try to convince the characters to kill the guardian naga on Level Nine, the cryohydra on Level Two, and anything else in the tower. If that's not possible, she'll urge Wistamoch to help her slay the PCs.

Obviously, if the characters get the *dendritan* off Wistamoch, she will return to herself. However, then they will have to cope with her *blinding* and *unearthly beauty* powers which she uses instinctively and immediately during the first round (she otherwise remains disoriented that round). The *dendritan* gives anyone who dons it the mind of a mind flayer (Will save DC 24).

Nymph (wearing the dendritan): CR7; 14 hp; AC 13; *Monster Manual* p. 143. Can use the following powers each three times per day (from helmet): *levitate, suggestion,* and *mind blast* (see *Monster Manual* p. 136). She has the following druid spells prepared: 6/5/4/3/1 *create water, cure minor wounds, detect magic, flare, mending, resistance, cure light wounds* (2), *endure elements, obscuring mist, summon nature's ally I, barkskin, flame blade, flaming sphere, produce flame, contagion, cure moderate wounds, protection from elements, flame strike.*

Succubus: 34 hp; +8 with greatsword, inflicting 2d6+2 damage; *Monster Manual* p. 41

Treasure: On the tables there are: full plate armor, masterwork banded mail, two longswords, a masterwork

great axe, a large steel shield, two daggers, a jeweled short sword (worth 250 gp), a pair of leather boots, a silk shirt, a *+1 mace*, a *potion of cure light wounds*, a *potion of cat's grace*, a scroll of *nondetection*, a scroll of *dispel magic*, a *+1 cloak of resistance*, a *wand of aid* (nine charges) and an *amulet of natural armor +1*.

Development: If the occupants of this room hear noises from either above or below, they move to investigate, eager to find someone or something that can get them out of here. Wistamoch casts the following spells on herself if she thinks there might be danger, however: *protection from elements* (probably fire), *barkskin* (increasing her AC to 17), and *flame blade*.

LEVEL EIGHT: THE TELEPORT WEB

This is the room that captures random teleporters.

This round room is filled with a lattice of silvery threads that appear to be made of energy. The ceiling here is domed, and painted with intricate arcane symbols and patterns.

Characters caught by the *teleport* web appear here, as does anyone that attempts to use a teleportation spell in the tower. Further, the magic of the place acts as a *suggestion* (Will save DC 15 to resist) to anyone (other than Ustran) who enters this room. The *suggestion*'s targets feel compelled to go down to Level Six and stand still for 1 round. Ustran intended for the sphere there to freeze them and make them his prisoners. This magical effect can potentially affect a given creature only once.

LEVEL NINE: THE ASTRAL SHARD (EL 10)

Level Nine is actually the roof of the tower.

Built on the tower's roof is a small structure that holds a massive, clear crystal pulsing with energy. Coiled around the crystal is a long, serpentine creature with the head of a stern but striking human woman. "Stand clear of the *Astral Shard*," she says, "or by Ustran's command, I must slay you."

The *Astral Shard*, though 4 feet in diameter, is actually quite fragile (hardness 3; hp 20; AC 5; Break DC 18). This large crystal, taken from the Astral Plane, will continue to create and power the *teleport* web until it is destroyed or sent back to the Astral Plane. If moved, it will recreate the *teleport* web somewhere near its new location.

Fighting on the roof, due to its slope, imparts a –2 circumstance penalty to all involved (except the naga, securely coiled at the top). Anyone falling prone must make a Balance check (DC 20) or roll down the side to the flat portion, suffering 1d3 points of damage.

Creatures: Ustran used potent enchantments to make a guardian naga the overseer of his most prized possession. Despite her lawful good alignment, she defends the *Shard* with her life.

Guardian Naga: 90 hp; *Monster Manual* p. 139

She knows the following spells (as well as all cleric spells and spells from the Good and Law domains): *detect magic, flare, ghost sound, light, mage hand, open/close, ray of frost, resistance, grease, mage armor, magic missile, shield, true strike, blur, bull's strength, cat's grace, see invisibility, displacement, fireball, haste, ice storm, wall of fire*.

Tactics: The naga has already cast *shield of faith, mage armor, bull's strength* (adding +3), *endurance* (adding +2), and *cat's grace* (adding +4). That gives her an additional +2 to attack and damage rolls, an AC of 27, and 101 hp. If she hears intruders coming and has time, she casts: *haste, see invisibility, displacement*, and *protection from elements* twice (cold and fire). That leaves her with six cantrips, five 1st-level spells, three 2nd-level spells, four 3rd-level spells, and five 4th-level spells. She uses these slots to pummel her foes (*hasted*) with two spells each round.

CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

Once the PCs have escaped from the tower—one way or another—the events in this adventure can continue to have an effect in your ongoing campaign. Ustran, for example, might return, having escaped from his own Astral race. If he finds his tower sacked and the *Astral Shard* destroyed, he will be eager for vengeance. If he finds the tower and *Shard* in good shape, he will go back to his evil schemes.

Hearing of the *Astral Shard*, another (human) wizard may attempt to commission the PCs to go to the Astral Plane to retrieve another one. Arcane research reveals that such an item can be found only in the deep recesses of the plane, where the very fabric of nothingness congeals into a crystalline substance. This is a dangerous place, haunted by monsters never before recorded .

Gulin Murth, if he survives, can become either an interesting ally or an enemy in further adventures, depending on how the PCs treated him. Likewise, Wistamoch the nymph, if she survives and is aided by the PCs, will reward them later with assistance or a great (nature-related) treasure. Perhaps she will show up at their home with a scroll containing some druid spells, or a bag of tricks—and of course, she might also bring news of another possible adventure…

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Monte Cook started working professionally in the game industry in 1988. In the employ of Iron Crown Enterprises, he worked with the *Rolemaster* and *Champions* games as an editor, developer, and designer. In 1994 Monte came to work at TSR as a game designer. As a senior game designer with Wizards of the Coast, he codesigned the new edition of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS and authored the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. His next release is *Return to the Temple of Elemental Evil.*

A graduate of the Clarion West writer's workshop, Monte has also published short stories and two novels. In his spare time, he runs anywhere from one to three games per week, holds a yearly game convention at his house, builds vast dioramas out of LEGO building bricks, and reads a lot of comics. For more of his recent d20 work, visit his website at `www.montecook.com`.